

## Message Text

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20

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-12 AID-20 COME-00 EB-11 FRB-02 TRSE-00 XMB-07

OPIC-12 CIEP-02 LAB-06 SIL-01 OMB-01 INT-08 CU-04

NIC-01 OPR-02 SY-10 RSR-01 /198 W

----- 034281

R 101730 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1173

INFO AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L NOUAKCHOTT 372

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT MR

SUBJECT: GOVT MOVES TO SEIZE INITIATIVE FROM DISSIDENTS

REF: NOUAKCHOTT 331 AND 336

SUMMARY: THE OULD DADDAH GOVERNMENT HAS  
OPENED ITS PROPAGANDA COUNTER ATTACK AGAINST CONTINUED  
ACTIVITIES OF DISSIDENTS IN NOUAKCHOTT, AT SAME TIME  
GIVING FIRST OFFICIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THAT THE POLITICAL  
SCENE HAD FOR PAST FIVE YEARS NOT BEEN ENTIRELY TRANQUIL.

1. THE GOVERNMENT'S CAMPAIGN TO AROUSE THE PARTY  
FAITHFUL AND COUNTER DISSIDENT ENTHUSIASM OPENED MAY 4  
WITH A MEETING OF RANKING NATIONAL AND LOCAL PEOPLES'  
PARTY CADRE CHAIRED BY PARTY "PERMANENT" SALL ABDUL  
AZIZ AND INTERIOR MINISTER AHMED OULD MOHAMED SALAH.  
SALL EXHORTED PARTY MILITANTS TO ORGANIZE THEMSELVES FOR  
"PSYCHOLOGICAL ACTION" TO COMBAT THOSE WHO WOULD CREATE  
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"ANARCHY AND CHAOS." HE ACCUSED THE OPPOSITIONISTS OF  
BEING INFECTED BY AN "IMPERIALIST VIRUS" AND A "DIPLOMA  
COMPLEX," OBVIOUS REFERENCES TO FRENCH EDUCATED STUDENTS  
AND TEACHERS WHO FORM THE BACKBONE OF ANY DISSIDENT

MOVEMENT HERE, NO MATTER HOW LOOSELY ORGANIZED. SALL ALSO TOLD PARTY MILITANTS TO COOPERATE WITH SECURITY FORCES IN SUPPRESSING SUBVERSION AND, SPECIFICALLY, ASKED RPARTY SECTIONS IN NOUAKCHOTT AND PROVINCIAL CENTERS TO MOBILIZE " SHOCK BRIGADES" IN ORDER SEIZE THE INITIATIVES FROM DISSIDENTS.

2. MININTERIOR SALAH DESCRIBED DISSIDENTS AS MEMBERS OF A " PSEUDO- DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT" BASED IN NOUAKCHOTT WHICH HAD SPROUTED IN ATMOSPHERE OF GOVERNMENT PATIENCE AND TOLERANCE, AND NOW SEEKS OVERTHROW OULD DADDAH REGIME. THOUGH HIS COMPLETE STATEMENT WAS NEITHER PUBLISHED NOR BROADCAST LOCALLY, DAKAR' S " LE SOLEIL" QUOTED THE MINISTER AS IDENTIFYING DISSIDENTS AS MEMBERS OF THE MOVEMENT DEMOCRATIQUE NATIONAL ( MDN) WHICH HE SAID WAS CREATED IN 1968 AND COMPOSED IN PART OF SUCH ILLEGAL CLANDESTINE ASSOCIATIONS AS REVOLUTIONARY ACTION COMMITTEE ( CARL) AND GENERAL UNION OF MAURITANIAN STUDENTS AND TRAINEES, AS WELL AS INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS, UNIONISTS, UNEMPLOYED PERSONS, AND POLITICAL MALCONTENTS. SALAH ACCUSED UNNAMED FOREIGNERS AND MAURITANIAN FUNCTIONARIES OF SECRETLY ABETTING MDN ACTIVITIES AND EXHIBITED WEAPONS AND PROPAGANDA MATERIALS PURPORTEDLY CONFISCATED DURING POLICE RAIDS ON THE HOMES OF DISSIDENTS.  
( FYI: WE HAVE NO FURTHER INFORMATION REGARDING THE SO- CALLED MDN, WHOSE INITIALS HAVE YET TO APPEAR IN THE WALL SLOGANS OR IN ANY OF THE SEVERAL DISSIDENT TRACTS WE HAVE READ.)

3. IN THE WAKE OF FRIDAY' S MEETING WENHAVE NOTED LITTLE INTENSIFICATION OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY, OTHER THAN A HANDFUL OF NEIGHBORHOOD PASS- THE- WORD- PEOPLES' PARTY MEETINGS. THE NATIONAL GUARD IS NOW PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR POLICING NOUAKCHOTT AND ITS MEN TOGETHER WITH GENDARMERIE PATROLS REMAIN MUCH IN EVIDENCE HERE. THE UNIFORMED POLICE REMAIN LARGELY RESTRICTED TO THEIR STATION HOUSES. THE CAPITAL' S  
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ARMY GARRISON HAS BEEN ON DESERT " MANEUVERS" ( DURING WEEK OF CONTINUED SAND STORMS) FOLLOWING THE APRIL 28 ARMY- POLICE SHOOTING INCIDENT ( NOUAKCHOTT 336).

4. FORMER OPPOSITIONIST LEADER, LONG TIME OULD DADDAH CRITIC AND MOST RECENTLY GIRM AMBASSADOR TO TRIPOLI, SULEIMAN OULD CHEIKH SIDYA, TELLS US THAT MAURITANIA IS ON BRINK NEW ERA OF VIOLENCE. HE PREDICTS ATTEMPTS AT ASSASSINATION OF POLITICAL LEADERS. THUS FAR HIS VIEWS SEEM TO BE MINORITY OPINION. IN THE LIGHT OF WHAT WE HAVE SEEN AND HEARD OVER THE PAST TWO WEEKS, BELIEVE OUR INITIAL ANALYSIS OF THE SITUATION ( NOUAKCHOTT 331) REMAINS VALID:

NEITHER THE GOVERNMENT AND PARTY, NOR THE LOOSELY  
ALIGNED DISSIDENT FACTIONS ARE YET CAPABLE OF  
ORGANIZING FOR SUSTAINED POLITICAL ACTION. DESPITE THEIR  
THREATENING TALK AND READINESS TO ORDER SECURITY FORCES  
TO CRACK HEADS, PARTYLEADERS REMAIN DISPOSED TO  
COMPROMISE, AS REPORTEDLY DO SOME AMONG DISSIDENTS.  
FINALLY, THE ARMY AND POLICE SHOW NO SIGNS OF TRYING TO  
WREST INITIATIVE AWAY FROM POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AS IT  
PONDERES ITS NEXT MOVES.  
MURPHY

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NMAFVVZCZ  
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